

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
DEFINED CONTRIBUTION
PROGRAM

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Statement of Investment Policy

**Adopted by NDPERS Board
March 28, 2007**

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STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Public Employees Retirement System Board (Board) hereby adopts this Statement of Investment Policy for the Deferred Compensation Companion Plan (Plan).

Objectives of the Plan

The Plan is a long-term retirement savings option intended as a source of retirement income for eligible participants. The investment options available from the Plan cover a broad range of investment risks and rewards typical of this kind of retirement savings program. Participants bear the risks and reap the rewards of investment returns that result from the investment options which they select.

This Statement of Investment Policy:

- Establishes the parameters of an investment program that will allow plan participants the opportunity to structure an investment strategy that meets their individual return objectives and risk tolerances.
- Defines the investment categories offered by the Plan;
- Establishes benchmarks and performance standards for each investment category by which to evaluate each fund's performance;
- Establishes a procedure for reporting and evaluating the various funds and a methodology for monitoring their performance; and
- Defines the procedures for investment fund evaluation and formal fund review.

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SELECTION OF INVESTMENT OPTIONS

Each investment option offered under the Plan must:

- Operate under its published prospectus;
- Have its performance results measured against the applicable performance standards described herein for that investment category.

The Board may add or replace investment options in any category using any or all of the following general criteria:

- A. Historical performance over a reasonable time frame.
- B. Investment manager performance and tenure.
- C. Costs, including the expense ratio and any other fees.

Mutual fund options are selected through a comprehensive search process. Generally, the Board will first review the suitable offerings from the vendor's alliance family of funds. Absent a competitive offering from the vendor's list of alliance funds, the Board will select from qualified non-alliance funds.

INVESTMENT CATEGORIES:

The Board in its judgment selects the number, types, and status of individual investment offerings. In general, the Board will seek to offer a sufficient number of investment funds to allow each participant the ability to construct a diversified portfolio consistent with his/her reasonable investment objective. The selection and elimination of investment options will be guided by the following philosophies and principles:

- A. The menu of offerings will be sufficient to allow each participant the ability to

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construct a diversified portfolio consistent with a reasonable investment goal. (See *Appendix 1* for a classification of the current offerings.) The menu will include at least one offering in each of the following asset categories:

- Stable Value Account
- Fixed Income
- Balanced
- Large Cap Equity
- Mid Cap Equity
- Small Cap Equity
- International Equity
- Asset Allocation

B. Within the domestic equity categories, the offerings may include funds that represent style subsets (value, growth, blend) of the broad market.

C. The offerings will include funds that offer pre-determined asset allocations of various risk tolerances or investment horizons.

D. The self-directed brokerage option is designed for a sophisticated, experienced and knowledgeable investor. Participants selecting this option will be required to sign an election form containing the following:

- (a) The participant understands and accepts any and all risks associated with this selection;
- (b) The participant understands and accepts that none of the mutual funds available in the self-directed brokerage option have been reviewed for suitability by the Board;
- (c) The participant is solely responsible for determining the suitability or appropriateness of any selected mutual fund; and
- (d) The participant agrees to hold the Plan and the Board harmless for any negative consequences resulting from use of the self-directed brokerage option.

REPORTING AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

The Board will designate the status of each investment fund offered as either open or closed:

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- . **Open** – Eligible for new investments.
- . **Closed** – Not eligible for new contributions, not eligible for the establishment of new accounts, and may require the existing accounts be transferred.

INVESTMENT FUND EVALUATION

The Board will at least annually review the plan and its investment funds, including investment performance. The investment performance review will include comparisons against the appropriate benchmark indices and peer groups over relevant time frames. The focus of the review will be to ensure that the Board is offering funds with competitive (average or above) performance within each category over reasonable measurement periods, typically encompassing a market cycle (3 to 5 years). The Board will also review the fund's investment style relative to its mandate and the stability of the personnel responsible for investment results. As the investment funds are retail mutual funds, the Board may rely on ratings produced by recognized performance evaluation services to evaluate long-term risk-adjusted performance relative to peers. Except for the annual review, the Board may delegate these duties to its investment sub-committee. The NDPERS Board will make the performance review available for the membership.

For performance benchmarks on current offerings, see *Appendix 1*. Funds meeting performance standards and policy objectives will be designated as open.

A. Funds rated as not meeting performance standards and policy objectives will, at the Board's discretion, either be placed in a closed status or on a "formal fund review list".

B. The Board, at its discretion, may remove funds from the "formal fund review list" should the fund's performance recover sufficiently to meet performance standards.

C. Funds that do not meet performance standards and/or policy objectives may be placed in the "Closed" status.

D. Failure by a fund to comply with these policy objectives and guidelines is cause for the Board to place the fund under formal fund review or close the fund.

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The Board may place a fund under formal fund review, or immediately close a fund, for any reason, including:

- A. The fund has made significant changes in its investment management, or such change appears imminent;
- B. The fund has had a significant change in ownership or control;
- C. The fund has significantly changed investment focus or has experienced style drift, departing from the investment objectives;
- D. The fund has violated a SEC rule or regulation;
- E. The fund has experienced difficulty in transacting trades, fund transfers, or pricing;
- F. The fund has experienced other changes or problems in its procedures, operations, investing, or reporting which, in the Board's view, has or could detract from the objectives of the Plan;
- G. The fund has increased its fees or expenses.
- H. Other reasons the NDPERS Board deems requires such action.

The Board retains the right to waive any of the above policies if it deems that such waiver is in the best interest of the plan and/or its participants.

FORMAL FUND REVIEW

When a fund has been placed under formal review, the Board shall monitor the fund, its operations, and its performance. During this period the Board may close the fund.

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CLOSED FUNDS

When the Board closes a fund it may direct that:

- A.** No new contributions may be made to the fund after a specified date;
- B.** The fund is terminated and participant account balances must be transferred to another fund option.

If the Board closes a fund to new contributions it shall:

- A.** Promptly notify the Plan provider;
- B.** Promptly notify plan participants who are currently investing in the fund or who have assets in the closed fund of the Board's action and if applicable that new investment monies must be redirected to another fund option under the Plan within a time specified by the Board.

If the Board closes a fund by terminating its participation in the plan and requires all account balances to be transferred to another fund it shall:

- A.** Promptly notify the Plan provider;
- B.** Promptly notify plan participants who are currently investing in the fund or who have assets in the closed fund that the Board has terminated the fund as an investment option under the Plan and that:
 - New investment monies must be redirected to another fund option under the Plan within a time specified by the Board and
 - After 90 days notice to an affected member by the Board, all assets remaining in the terminated fund will be transferred to the default option designated by the Board.

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APPENDIX 1

Defined Contribution Plan Investment Options by Investment Category

Asset Class	Sector	Fund(s)	Benchmark(s)
Balanced	Balanced	Fidelity Puritan	60% Large Cap Value Fund Universe and 40% Taxable Bond Fund Universe 60% Russell 3000 Value and 40% Lehman Aggregate Bond Index
Large Cap Equities	Value	Fidelity Equity-Income	Large Cap Value Fund Universe Russell 1000 Value
	Blend	Fidelity Dividend Growth	S&P 500 Large Cap Blend Fund Universe
		Fidelity Spartan US Equity Index	S&P 500 Large Cap Blend Fund Universe
	Growth	Fidelity Growth Company	Russell 3000 growth Large Cap Growth Fund Universe
		Fidelity Blue Chip Growth	Russell 1000 growth Large Cap Growth Fund Universe
Mid Cap Equities	Value	Mutual Shares A Goldman Sachs Mid Cap Value	Mid Cap Value Universe Russell Mid Cap Value
	Blend	Dreyfus Mid Cap Index	Mid Cap Blend Universe S & P Mid Cap 400
		Fidelity Spartan Extended Index	Mid Cap Blend Universe Wilshire 4500 Index
	Growth	Fidelity Mid Cap Stock	Mid Cap Growth Universe Russell Mid Cap Growth

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Small Cap Equities	Value	PIMCO Small Cap Value	Small Value Universe Russel 2000 Value
	Blend	Dreyfus Small Cap Index	Small Cap Blend Universe Russel 2000 Index
	Growth	MSDW Small Co B	Small Cap Growth Universe Russel 2000 Growth
Fixed Income		Fidelity Managed Income Portfolio	GIC 5 yr
		PIMCO Total Return Bond Fund	Lehman Aggregate Bond Index Taxable Bond Fund Universe
International Equities		Fidelity Diversified International	MSCI EAFE Index International Stock Fund Universe
Asset Allocation		<u>Fidelity Freedom Funds</u>	The Fidelity Freedom Funds will be benchmarked using the Wilshire 5000 Index, EAFE Index, LB Aggregate Bond Index, High Yield Index, and 3-Month T-Bill Index. Each fund benchmark will be based on the fund allocation in Domestic Equity, International Equity, Investment Grade Fixed-Income, High Yield Fixed-Income, and Money Market stated in the fund prospectus.
		Income Fund Benchmark	
		2000 Fund Benchmark	
		2005 Fund Benchmark	
		2010 Fund Benchmark	
		2015 Fund Benchmark	
		2020 Fund Benchmark	
		2025 Fund Benchmark	
		2030 Fund Benchmark	
		2035 Fund Benchmark	
		2040 Fund Benchmark	
		2045 Fund Benchmark	
		2050 Fund Benchmark	